

Meeting Notes

Chancellor's Community Forum
December 16, 2009
6:30 pm
Patterson Elementary School

Overview: Chancellor Michelle Rhee and Dr. Peggy O'Brien introduced Evan Smith, Director of School Operations, who walked through the FY 2011 Budget Process for LSRT and SBC chairs and the community with Dr. Richard Nyankori, Deputy Chancellor for Special Education, Dr. O'Brien, Chief of Family and Public Engagement, Dr. Tasha Johnson, Deputy Chief Academic Officer, and Elba Garcia, Director of the Office of Bilingual Education.

Attendance: 130+ community members

Notes:

Issue	Comments
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Peggy O'Brien welcomed all. She told the community members that their input is significant and important in determining 2011 budgets. "We are starting earlier to give you more time to be engaged." She shared that make-up session information will be provided later and this session would be broadcast online and on cable. LSRT hotline and e-mail address information would also be shared during presentation. Later she explained the roles of LSRT and SBC chairs and LSRT/SBC members.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chancellor Rhee shared that DCPS has several priorities for how we want the budget process to work. She assured those gathered that the Mayor has committed to doing his best to protect school resources. “We’re giving a high-level overview of the steps and timeline of what’s necessary and will offer technical assistance sessions between now and mid-January at which time you will receive your numbers and the work will begin.”
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evan Smith began by discussing the three categories of the evening’s presentation. He went on to provide some back story to the budget process and changes for this year’s process. He shared that enrollment numbers won’t be available until early January, but that budget is determined by these numbers. He introduced the two-day petition and review period that principals and LSRT/SBC will have after Jan. 4 to ask for changes to their enrollment projections. He explained the two types of petitions and that there isn’t as much flexibility this year as in previous years so the turnarounds are tighter and the requirements are more stringent. The five categories of non-personnel spending were also detailed. He noted details about the Read 180 program and a new guideline for meeting school furniture needs. The top five under-budgeted fields in FY 10 were also listed. He also gave the timeline for final allotments and the end of the entire process. He noted that this year budgets not signed off on by LSRT will not be accepted from principals. The dates for the technical assistance workshops were given and principals were informed that this year they’re also being asked to present the final budgets to their communities at the process’ end. The LSRT help line and e-mail address was shared.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dr. Richard Nyankori described the types, roles and sources of funding for Special Education instructional paraprofessionals. He shared that this year an audit would be done of all dedicated aides to ensure they’re being used to their fullest extent.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Elba Garcia explained how the allocation for English Language Learners works. “It’s based on the number of ELL students in the building. The equations themselves offer no wiggle room, but if necessary a rearrangement/recount of students and levels can be petitioned.”
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Dr. Tasha Johnson discussed the different types of federal interest in local school budgets: Title I Grant, Title I Parent Involvement, and Title II Grant, and Head Start. She pointed out the nuances that will be elevated in this year’s budget. She shared that the vast majority of our schools are running Title I Grant program and quality to offer free or reduced lunch.
Q: Are there independent contractors determining enrollment?	MR: After last year, the CC passed legislation calling for OSSE to engage in a process with vendors to determine enrollment as a third party. There is a group that includes the 21 st Century and Brookings Institute that will be giving us those numbers for each individual school. They’re looking at current and past enrollment as well as special considerations, such as a housing initiative in the neighborhood. It will be an incredibly high bar that we will be setting since they are giving us our enrollment allocation and though numbers may go up, money is not increasing.
Q: Are the core staffing allocations for PE going to be increased this year to comply with the council’s requirements for PE for elementary kids?	MR: Just learned about the legislation today. If it passes, I don’t know how we can accommodate it without additional funds to avoid getting rid of other things. We’ll have to work through this with the Council to find out what their expectations are about whether this is ideal or to be implemented.

<p>Q: When will we see money from enrollments being met and/or exceeded?</p>	<p>MR: Our biggest issue is that our enrollment district-wide is higher than what we were funded for but we haven't received additional dollars for the students above what was projected so we don't have the dollars to give to the schools.</p>
<p>Q: Since every school didn't exceed enrollment targets, shouldn't equalization have fixed this?</p>	<p>What's the plan to get this done? MR: If it has not occurred at your school, let us know. It's occurred at most.</p>
<p>Q: For art and PE, there seems to be an unfunded mandate in the core enrollment budget, there isn't a required FTE or an adjustment to FTEs based on school size. Are you going to do anything around adjusting budgets for FTEs for larger schools for PE and Art?</p>	<p>MR: Yes, we started doing a little of that last year and we're going to continue working on that. For the few ES with over 400 students, we want to make sure that we aren't just allocating one per school, but that you have the additional resources you need.</p>
<p>Q: There's an overlap of technology and librarians, but no line item for large ES so you have to do an adjustment if you want to get a technology teacher or do something greater than an FTE or library. How will you increase flexibility in the budget around technology and librarians?</p>	<p>MR: In terms of a librarian, it falls in the same lines of a gym teacher or music, in terms of that should go up when the students go up. Technology is different because we empower the schools to decide if that's something they want to focus on and then hire their own staff. That's what flexible spending pot is for.</p>
<p>Q: Where in the budget will the foreign language programs go?</p>	<p>MR: At the ES level, in flexible funds or, if the school is CATALYST in world cultures and foreign languages, that would be budgeted separately.</p>
<p>Q: Will we identify exactly how TI will be spent in budget?</p>	<p>TJ: Principals should be engaging you. Typically see in back to school nights. It should be a part of initial and ongoing planning. If you need additional support, POB can help facilitate those conversations. OSSE will release the NCLB</p>

	Consolidated application over the summer and the community can share where they'd like to see those funds spent. If you are in a school-wide program, Title I money and Parent Involvement Money and title II are a part of your local budget and it should be a line item. If you fall under 40%, each of the three will be separate line items and are not combined in your school budget.
Q:Where do after-school funds come into place?	MR: Currently, it falls into school support bucket which includes security and food service. It is not in the school budget.
Q:Is it LSRT or SBC for schools?	MR: It should be the LSRT. The only school that should have SBC instead is those that didn't go through the process in the spring to elect a formal LSRT and there are only about six.
Q:Will the MR program fall under the reconsidered cluster school program?	RN: No.
Q:Do you have any data that will tell you how many preschool/preK students will be coming into DC next year?	MR: Yes. We had an increase from last year to this year of 15% in our PreK slots and we're anticipating the same next year.
Q:Some of the older schools need furniture badly. Do we have to buy it?	MR: First we recommend that you request we look in the warehouse from where we can accommodate a lot of school's requests for furniture. In the event that a school want something we cannot provide, the school will have to buy it.

<p>Q:Are in-school parent centers part of the budget?</p>	<p>MR: Parent resource centers are separate, but if it is a school- specific parent center (Tubman, Shad, and MC Terrell), and not district-wide, it is from the school’s budget. TJ: Those parental involvement title I dollars can support the centers, but are to be used to further engage parents, customized to identified parents needs. In the budget, it typically says “parent partners.”</p>
<p>Q:How specific will the enrollment numbers be on Jan. 4 and will there be current year comparisons?</p>	<p>LR: You’ll receive the projection for the upcoming year by grade level, but it will not be based solely on audit count. It will consider trends from other years. Last year a great deal was placed on residency and we’re going to continue that.</p>
<p>Q:Often schools can purchase things at lower prices than going through the central system. Is there any way to safeguard those funds and manage that situation?</p>	<p>MR: I hear this often from schools and we never want schools in this situation. One of the things that Mr. Tata is doing is looking at schools’ individual purchases to see how we can take advantage of our buying power. AT: We are sitting up blanket purchase agreements to leverage our buying power. All of the blanket purchase agreements business managers are aware of this so they’re aware of volume pricing.</p>